

NEWS RELEASE

**OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY
SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF ILLINOIS**

**RONALD J. TENPAS
UNITED STATES ATTORNEY**

Nine Executive Drive, Fairview Heights, Illinois 62208, Telephone (618) 628-3700

For Immediate Release

March 30, 2005

Ronald J. Tenpas, United States Attorney for the Southern District of Illinois, announced today that on March 25, 2005, **JAMES COOPER, JR., a/k/a "Coop,"** age 37, of Carbondale, Illinois, was convicted by a jury in United States District Court in East St. Louis, Illinois. COOPER was convicted of conspiracy to distribute more than 50 grams of crack cocaine, possession with intent to distribute more than 50 grams of crack cocaine, distribution of crack cocaine, possession with intent to distribute cocaine, and unlawful possession of a firearm by a felon. COOPER was acquitted on one count of conspiracy to distribute cocaine. The offenses occurred between September 2000 and July 9, 2003, in Carbondale, Illinois.

COOPER's drug offenses carry a penalty of 10 years' to life imprisonment, a fine of up to \$3,000,000, and a term of 5 years' supervised release. The firearm offense carries a penalty of up to 10 years' imprisonment, a fine of up to \$250,000, and a term of 3 years' supervised release. COOPER is set for sentencing on July 8, 2005. Co-defendant **JAMES A. GOLDEN, a/k/a "Cotton,"** age 54, was previously sentenced to 70 months' imprisonment for his involvement in the crack cocaine conspiracy.

The investigation was conducted by the Jackson County Sheriff's Office, Carbondale Police Department, Southern Illinois Enforcement Group, Murphysboro Police Department, Drug Enforcement Administration and Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms pursuant to their participation in the Jackson County Project Safe Neighborhoods Initiative. Under the Project Safe Neighborhoods Initiative, federal, state, and local law enforcement and prosecutors are working together to prosecute drug dealers, felons in possession of firearms, and criminals that use firearms to commit violent offenses or drug trafficking offenses in the system that will get them the most time. The Jackson County Project Safe Neighborhoods Initiative is a joint and cooperative effort of the United States Attorney's Office, Jackson County States Attorney's Office, Drug Enforcement Administration, Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms, Carbondale Police Department, Jackson County Sheriff's Office, Murphysboro Police Department, and Southern Illinois Enforcement Group.

The case is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Amanda A. Robertson.